

NORTHGATE STAKEHOLDERS GROUP DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY

**North Seattle Community College
ED 2843A in the Dr. Peter Ku Education Building
Thursday, March 18, 2004, 4:00pm – 7:00pm**

The Northgate Stakeholders Group (Group) held its initial meeting at North Seattle Community College on Thursday, March 18, 2004 from 4:00pm to 7:00pm. The purposes of the meeting were to:

- Convene the stakeholders Group;
- Review and approve the Group's process, ground rules and schedule;
- Provide informational presentations; and
- Discuss public participation and community forums.

Welcome

Interim Chair Ron LaFayette

Ron LaFayette, President of North Seattle Community College, opened the meeting at 4:00 pm and welcomed the Group to campus. He explained that he had been asked to serve as an interim chair for a few meetings until the Group could elect a permanent chair.

Mayor Greg Nickels

Mayor Greg Nickels thanked Group members for being willing to roll up their sleeves and to work together for the long-term benefit of the Northgate area. He noted that the vision of Northgate had been to knit it together, to create a "sense of place" and said that this Group would have the opportunity to create such a *place*. Attitudes about what makes for a great community have changed, he said, from the years when the Northgate mall was first developed. The goal now, he said, is to let people walk and enjoy their neighborhoods, to be able to connect to public transit, to restore the natural values that have been lost over time, and to create a great place to live and work. This group, he said, has a chance to break ground on a new civic place. He thanked Ron LaFayette for agreeing to serve as Interim Chair. He also noted that the City had retained the services of Triangle Associates, an independent facilitation team, to convene and facilitate the stakeholders Group. Nickels briefly reviewed the issues identified in Resolution #30642 [Northgate Framework Resolution] and confirmed the City's commitment to participate and to listen.

Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck

Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck offered special thanks to everyone for coming together to get to work and lead the way to a brighter Northgate. As a 14-year resident of Northgate, he said he considered himself a de facto stakeholder and was committed to seeing the area's longstanding goals come to fruition. These include a strong urban center that offers a full array of services,

that is a great place to shop, play and live, and that is less auto-oriented. He said he felt a strong-three-way partnership had been created, involving the community, business, and the City. He encouraged the Group to trust one other, and to recognize that this Group represented a new chapter for Northgate. He concluded by noting that every successful plan for redevelopment begins with a community vision; he hoped the Group would stick to that vision and work toward consensus.

Department of Planning and Development, John Rahaim

John Rahaim, Planning Director of the Department of Planning and Development (DPD), stated that DPD had been charged by the City to help set up and facilitate the stakeholders Group. The City, he said, saw this Group as a critically important forum for vetting key issues. He conveyed greetings from DPD's Director, Diane Sugimura who was unable to attend. Rahaim said that the City was moving ahead on pedestrian and open-space issues and announced that there would be a workshop on Thursday, March 25th to begin creating a more pedestrian friendly area.

Introductions

Alice Shorett, the meeting facilitator (Triangle Associates), initiated Group introductions. Representatives were each given one minute to introduce themselves and their alternate and to share their vision of what they hoped the Group would have accomplished over the coming 10-year period. [See the attendance list at the end of this summary.]

The "accomplishments" identified in individual remarks included the following:

- Achievement of consensus around a common vision that leads to Northgate's revitalization
- The creation of a pleasant, visually attractive place – a place people like to live, work, shop, have fun, connect ("a community gathering place"), dine and be entertained
- A place that has cleaner air because it is more pedestrian-friendly and people choose to walk rather than use their cars.
- An area where people can walk, safely and conveniently, to community destinations
- High use of transit to move around combined with much less dependence on cars
- A vibrant community with a beautiful, living creek
- Diverse, flourishing businesses throughout Northgate
- Traffic flows that encourage people to come to Northgate rather than discouraging them

Following introductions, the facilitator reviewed the meeting agenda and invited those who wanted to speak during the public comment period to sign up.

Group Process

Key Themes

Alice introduced Vicki King, also of Triangle Associates, the primary interviewer for the stakeholders' Group convening. Vicki reviewed the selection process for choosing the Group,

noting that representatives and alternates for seats 1-12 had been designated by their respective organizations, whereas those for seats 13-22 were selected from a pool of nominees. She then identified the key themes that emerged from the interviews relative to the major issues and concerns, hopes and fears for the process, and the elements needed for the Group to be successful. (The summary of key themes was included in member notebooks.)

Charter

Alice briefly reviewed the key points from the Northgate Framework Resolution that served as the Group's charter. (See the website for the text of the Charter.) She said that Group members had commented during the interviews that this was the right set of issues to focus on: "It is big; it is important; it's what we should be talking about."

Ground Rules

Alice noted that Group members had been asked their opinion of the draft ground rules during the convening process. She pointed out that it was important for the Group to review, revise where appropriate, and adopt the ground rules.

She noted that meeting summaries (discussed on p. 4) would be drafted and sent to the members in advance of the next meeting. At that meeting the Group would review, revise, if necessary, and approve the summary at which point the summary would be considered final. She also noted the ground rule about decision-making (pp. 4-5) and the ground rule about having the Chairperson serve as the spokesperson for the Group's overall progress (p. 5).

A question was raised about the intent of the ground rule about representation (top of p. 3). After discussion, the Group revised the ground rule to read as follows: "Members are asked to represent the points of view of their general interest area, including but not limited to the particular organization from which they come."

In response to a question, the facilitator responded that the Group meetings were being [audio] taped.

The Chair then said that he was going to ask the group to take its first official action. He called for a motion to accept the draft ground rules as amended. The motion was seconded and approved by consensus.

Levels of Review and Deliberation

David Harrison from the Evans School of Public Administration, at the University of Washington (also on the Triangle Associates facilitation team) referred the Group to the yellow sheet in their notebooks entitled, "Levels of Review by Community Stakeholders." He presented the following five levels of review to guide the decision-making process and assist the Group in providing advice:

1. Information only,
2. Information and comment,
3. Evaluation of approach,

4. Narrowing options, and
5. Recommending a single option.

He said that it was important that there should always be consensus on the *level* of review and deliberation so there was agreement on how far to go. For example, this meeting was going to be at level one, information only. He noted that the time commitment grew as one moved from level one to level five.

Proposed Schedule/Discussion

Alice Shorett reviewed the process chart and schedule that identified dates for future meetings through June 2004 and agenda topics. She said that the schedule was being driven by the City Council's Northgate Framework Resolution and Bruce Lorig's proposed South Lot development. The meeting dates and time were as follows:

- Tuesday, April 20th, 4pm – 7pm
- Tuesday, May 11th, 4pm – 7pm
- Thursday, May 20th, 4pm – 7pm
- Thursday, June 3rd, 4pm – 7pm

All meetings would be held at North Seattle Community College. In response to a suggestion that meetings should begin later to allow more observers to attend, the facilitators reported that the proposed times were based on preferences expressed during the convening interviews. The Chair indicated that agendas could be designed so that weightier matters would occur later in the meeting but upcoming meetings would be held from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM.

During the discussion of the process, one member observed that open space did not appear to be adequately emphasized and there did not appear to be adequate time allotted to address open space and green space. The facilitator noted this. Another member suggested that information about transit-oriented development should be presented so it could be factored in as the other issues were considered. It was agreed that such a presentation should be scheduled at the May 11th meeting.

In response to a member's request for more information about the March 25 pedestrian workshop, Marty Curry, Director of the Seattle Planning Commission, addressed the Group. She pointed out that the purpose of the workshop would be to kick off the larger effort of coordinating pedestrian connections and bicycle routes. There would be an opportunity to look at where people go and how they get there. She said that surveys had been distributed throughout the community to gather additional information about how people get around. She said they hoped that Group members and the public would attend.

Vicki King presented a summary of recommended approaches for disseminating information to the public that were identified in the community interviews and asked members to let her know of any additional approaches. (See PowerPoint slides for additional details.)

Informational Presentations¹:

Ron LaFayette, Chair then introduced the informational portion of the meeting. He said that the Group would hear three presentations, with opportunities to ask clarifying questions after each one. These presentations were designed to provide background information about each of the Charter topics that needed Group attention over the spring of 2004. The Chair reminded the Group that they were in the Level 1 “information receiving” mode of the deliberation spectrum.

Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan (CTIP)

Grace Crunican, Director of the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), presented information on the Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan (CTIP). She said that this plan was intended to facilitate the creation of an overall program, to ensure that all ways of moving around were addressed and integrated. In terms of schedule, she said the City would develop a workplan, with a goal of having a final workplan by June 3. The City, she said, is looking to the Group to tell the City what the community wants so these desires can be factored in and the City can better serve area residents and businesses. Once the workplan is final, she said, the City will evaluate projects and programs over the next year and figure out how to implement them. By the summer of 2005, the City’s goal is to have final recommendations and a list of projects that will support the Northgate vision: a pedestrian and transit-friendly area, with effective traffic management and neighborhood traffic calming. She said that at the Group’s April 20 meeting, Tony Mazzella (project manager for CTIP) would explain the process in greater detail. .

Question: Is this strictly focused on capital investments or will it look at one-way streets or traffic roundabouts?

Response: Yes, all of it. The project is focused very much on the broader issues. We’re looking at the overall process to make traffic work for everyone.

South Lot Development Concepts

Bruce Lorig, President of Lorig Associates (a local housing development firm), presented information on three South Lot development concepts. He briefly reviewed the site history and layout, key objectives of their agreement with the City, and proposed development ideas. Lorig emphasized the importance of getting feedback and discussion of priorities on these plans by a major financial deadline in early June 2004.

Comment: I recommend that you work with smaller grocery stores, PCC, Red Apple, etc., rather than the larger grocery store chains.

Response: There is at least one smaller store that has expressed some interest.

Question: Is your option to proceed contingent on the City’s purchasing a part of the South Lot?

Response: Yes, we will not proceed unless the City commits. That’s necessary to make it all work.

¹ PowerPoint slides of the informational presentations were provided in the members’ notebooks and are also available online at <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/planning/northgate/>.

Question: Is the City prepared to commit? Does the City have the funding?

Response: (Jackie Kirn, City of Seattle) She said that when the City Council set this process in motion, the City made an agreement with Simon Properties for an option to purchase the land for \$375,000 for a period of one year. During this time, the City Council would like the Group to develop a well-integrated solution for the South Lot that benefits Thornton Creek. She said that the City was prepared to move ahead. As a result of the Group's work, she said, the Mayor wanted to present legislation to the City Council in June that incorporates solutions that the Group develops.

Question: Is the parking structure intended to be shared space?

Response: (Lorig) We want to do shared parking. However, shared parking between a park & ride and retail does not work because they need the space at the same time. Our proposal is to share parking between housing and retail, which is more feasible.

Break

Stormwater Concepts for the South Lot

Miranda Maupin from Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) presented three options for addressing stormwater, described as follows:

- Daylighting Thornton Creek,
- A natural system, and
- A hybrid option of the two.

Comment: The slide presentation showed that the natural drainage system had no excavation, yet one of your other slides showed that it did have excavation. Please clarify which is correct. Also, are cross-sections taken at maximum depth? The entire channel would not be 20 or 25 ft deep. Please clarify.

Response: We will note that and clarify.

A member requested a contact list for City staff. It was agreed that this information would be provided.

Public Comment Period

Ron LaFayette opened the floor for public comment, calling first on people who had already signed up to speak.

Question: Is there a way for respectful consideration to be given when a comment is made?

Response: (Alice Shorett) This is a question for the Group to consider.

Response: (David Harrison) The Group may not be ready to respond at the point the comment is made and may want to reserve the right to respond at a later time.

Response: (Mark Troxel) Meeting observers are encouraged to fill in comment cards that will be available at every meeting.

Comment: I've lived in this neighborhood for 50 years, and for 50 years we've been talking about the pipe in the wetland area that is the parking lot. Improve my property by developing Northgate. Why are we talking about private property? Property owners, develop your property or not, but let's stop talking about doing things and just get on with it.

Response: (Ron LaFayette) I did hear your comments and the answers to them will be the subject of our work.

Comment: I've lived in this community for 20 years and am the chair of Citizens for a Livable Northgate. I wanted to share the comment made earlier today. I'm gravely disappointed that not everyone who has a seat is here today. There is much history to how this came today. There needs to be a Planned Action EIS; this was a strong community recommendation. The GDP that governed Northgate from 1990 to December 2003 called for a SEPA process. A major transformation of Northgate should not take place in a vacuum. A Planned Action EIS was considered the best way to get there. It needs to be on the table. Secondly, I hope that stakeholders will consider coming to other meetings in the area. Please understand that it's not just the 22 of you that make up the Northgate area. I hope you will be open to joining one of the other groups.

Response: John Rahaim (DPD) said he would like to discuss the EIS in more detail, at a future meeting.

Comment: Janet Way offered that the Northgate Chamber is a Group that people might want to consider joining; it meets once a month and covers many of these issues.

Question: I represent many of these groups and I'm wondering if there will be specific forums where this information will be presented to the community?

Response: (Alice Shorett) Forums will be held quarterly, as identified in the City Council Resolution. This Group will shape them.

Comment: SPU didn't clarify the community forums in their flyer. People should be made aware of these meetings. Many people are involved and should be notified. A suggestion would be to send an e-mail or flyer to give the website address. Can anyone here give you suggestions for mailing list names?

Response: (Alice Shorett) Yes, we can implement these suggestions. Mark Troxel (DPD) has a fairly sizeable list and additional names can be sent to him. The website is in the works and PDFs of the materials will be posted for everyone to review.

Comment: The Seattle Channel would be a good medium to record and broadcast meeting information. We would like a bigger room to accommodate more people. Also, I suggest that the Group reserve time to talk among yourselves (stakeholders).

Comment: (Richard Conlin, City Councilmember) (With respect to the Planned Action EIS) The City Council and the Executive are discussing how to do a Planned EIS. We will get back to you. Later he also announced that the Council briefing on the process was scheduled for March 29th at 9:30 AM. He said it was to be broadcast live on the Seattle Channel. After that time, it would be available for viewing over the Internet.

Comment: The framework you will be grappling with includes regional transit, the shopping mall but also community functions. Hopefully the panel will be trying to protect and preserve these. How do we balance these functions? You can't ignore the interface of the urban center with the communities.

Comment: I wanted to ask for information to be available online. It is very important for as much information as possible to be online, including the notebook materials. I would like to also ask for the meeting summaries to be available to the public in draft and to be available at the same timeline as the stakeholders receive them.

Closing Remarks

The Chair asked the stakeholders if they had any further questions or comments.

Comment: There is so much information. If we want to bring ourselves up to speed, it would be helpful if there were a place for stakeholders to be able to educate themselves about stakeholder issues. This is critical in order to be effective.

Response: (Alice Shorett) During the interview process it was suggested there be a space in a library where you could sit and read background information.

Comment: I would like to request a periodic mini update/reality check from the City Council and Mayor's office so that we can be kept in the loop. It would also help the perception of the legitimacy of the stakeholder process.

Comment: A member requested that jargon be kept to a minimum.

Comment: Given the short timelines, it would be ideal to get the public notification out to the wider community. The City might want to use existing forums or community newsletters as a means of distributing information. For example, the Maple Leaf publication deadline is March 25th and the Maple Leaf Community Meeting is April 28.

Comment: Because of the compressed timeline, it would be nice if stakeholders had contact information for others on the group

Response (Alice Shorett): We will provide that.

Ron LaFayette thanked the Group members and those who made presentations. He invited the Group to join him for a light meal provided by the culinary staff at North Seattle Community College.

The facilitator reminded the Group about the Saturday, April 10th bus tour which would be an opportunity to get an orientation to the Northgate "urban core" and to become better acquainted with other members. She said additional information would be forthcoming.

She also briefly reviewed the topics planned for the April 20th Group meeting.

Chairman Ron LaFayette adjourned the meeting at 6:55pm

Meeting Attendance

Representatives and Alternates of the **Northgate Stakeholders Group** in attendance were:

King County Metro: Rep. Ron Posthuma

Simon Properties: Rep. Gary Weber, Alt. Sam Stalin

Maple Leaf Community Council: Rep. Janice Camp, Alt. Mel Vannice

Licton Springs Community Council: Rep. Jerry Owens, Alt. Shannon Snider

Haller Lake Community Council: Rep. Velva Maye, Alt. Sue Geving

Pinehurst Community Council: Rep. Lorena Mrachek

Victory Heights Community Council: Alt. Molly Burke

Northgate Chamber of Commerce: Rep. Shaiza Damji, Alt. Scott Greer

Thornton Creek Alliance: Rep. John Lombard, Alt. Erik Davido

Thornton Creek Legal Defense Fund: Rep. Janet Way, Alt. Bob Vreeland

North Seattle Community College: Rep. Ronald H. LaFayette, Alt. Bruce Kieser

Northwest Hospital: Rep. Chris Roth

Owners of Three or More Acres: Rep. Kevin Wallace, Alt. Rodney Russell

Senior Housing: Rep. Jeanne Hayden, Alt. Sandra Morgan

Renters/Condominium Owners:

Multi-family Housing Developers: Alt. Tom Donnelly

Businesses Inside the Mall:

Businesses Outside the Mall: Rep. Michelle Rupp, Alt. Dallas Carleton

Youth: Rep. Diana Medina, Alt. Alexia Dorsch

Labor: Rep. Brad Larrsen, Alt. David Hellene

At-large: Rep. Shawn Olesen, Alt. Barbara Maxwell

At-large: Rep. Marilyn Firlotte, Alt. Mike Vincent

Members of the Triangle Associates facilitation team included: Alice Shorett, David Harrison, Vicki King, and Darcie Garland-Renn.